*BARCK Obama born August 4, 1961) is the* [*44th*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States) *and* [*current*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidency_of_Barack_Obama)[*President of the United States*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States)*. He is the* [*first*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_African-American_firsts)[*African American*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American) *to hold the office. Obama previously served as a* [*United States senator*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate) *from* [*Illinois*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois)*, from January 2005 until he resigned following* [*his election*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2008) *to the presidency in November 2008.*

*A native of* [*Honolulu*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honolulu)*,* [*Hawaii*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii)*, Obama is a graduate of* [*Columbia University*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbia_University) *and* [*Harvard Law School*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_Law_School)*, where he was the president of the* [*Harvard Law Review*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_Law_Review)*. He was a* [*community organizer*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_organizing) *in Chicago before earning his* [*law degree*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juris_Doctor)*. He worked as a* [*civil rights*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_and_political_rights) *attorney in Chicago and taught* [*constitutional law*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutional_law) *at the* [*University of Chicago Law School*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Chicago_Law_School) *from 1992 to 2004.*

*Obama* [*served three terms*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois_Senate_career_of_Barack_Obama) *in the* [*Illinois Senate*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois_Senate) *from 1997 to 2004. Following an unsuccessful bid against the Democratic incumbent for a seat in the* [*United States House of Representatives*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives) *in 2000, he ran for* [*United States Senate*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate) *in 2004. Several events brought him to national attention during the campaign, including his victory in the March 2004* [*Democratic primary*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate_election_in_Illinois,_2004#Democratic_primary) *and his* [*keynote address*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Democratic_National_Convention_keynote_address) *at the* [*Democratic National Convention*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Democratic_National_Convention) *in July 2004. He won* [*election to the U.S. Senate*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate_election_in_Illinois,_2004) *in November 2004. His presidential campaign began in February 2007, and after* [*a close campaign*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama_presidential_primary_campaign,_2008) *in the* [*2008 Democratic Party presidential primaries*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_(United_States)_presidential_primaries,_2008) *against* [*Hillary Rodham Clinton*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillary_Rodham_Clinton)*, he won his party's nomination. In* [*the 2008 general election*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2008)*, he defeated* [*Republican*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_(United_States)) *nominee* [*John McCain*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McCain)*, and was* [*inaugurated as president*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inauguration_of_Barack_Obama) *on January 20, 2009. In October 2009, Obama was named the* [*2009 Nobel Peace Prize*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2009_Nobel_Peace_Prize)[*laureate*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laureate)*. In April 2011, Obama announced his intention to seek* [*re-election*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama_presidential_campaign,_2012) *in the* [*2012 presidential election*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2012)*.*[*[4]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama#cite_note-3)

*As president, Obama signed* [*economic stimulus*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stimulus_(economic)) *legislation in the form of the* [*American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Recovery_and_Reinvestment_Act_of_2009) *in February 2009 and the* [*Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tax_Relief,_Unemployment_Insurance_Reauthorization,_and_Job_Creation_Act_of_2010) *in December 2010. Other domestic policy initiatives include the* [*Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patient_Protection_and_Affordable_Care_Act)*, the* [*Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodd%E2%80%93Frank_Wall_Street_Reform_and_Consumer_Protection_Act) *and the* [*Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don%27t_Ask,_Don%27t_Tell_Repeal_Act_of_2010)*.*

*In foreign policy, Obama gradually withdrew combat troops from* [*Iraq*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_War)*, increased troop levels in* [*Afghanistan*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Afghanistan_(2001%E2%80%93present))*, signed an* [*arms control treaty*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_START) *with* [*Russia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia)*, and ordered enforcement of the* [*United Nations-sanctioned no-fly zone*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_military_intervention_in_Libya) *over* [*Libya*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libya) *in early 2011. On May 1, 2011, Obama announced that a small team of American military forces* [*killed*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Osama_bin_Laden)[*Osama bin Laden*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osama_bin_Laden) *in Pakistan*